

TH: PACIFIC

## Commercial Advertiser.

WALTER G. SMITH - - - EDITOR

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Mr. Roberts, the Polygamist, says he is ready to fight. As about everybody else is ready also, most of them on the other side, Mr. Roberts would do well to engage a special ambulance to attend him in the field.

It was well for Johannesburg that Dr. Jameson did not reach there in 1895 and stir up a rebellion. Judging from the way the Boers are showing up it would have been one of the shortest-lived insurrections in history, not excepting some that have happened here.

The Miowera brought papers of the 17th. The telegraphic contents of these are incorporated in this morning's Advertiser but they do not include the news, delivered by word of mouth as the steamer was leaving Victoria, that General Joubert is still alive. An official denial of his death had just been received by wire.

The Springfield Republican concedes that there is small comfort in the Iowa returns for the "anti-imperialists." The Democratic nominee for Governor dropped silver and made his fight against expansion. As a result he was beaten by more than 60,000 majority. "It must be freely admitted," says the Republican mournfully, "that the President's policy is indorsed."

Emperor William was on his way to England several days ago and is doubtless in the midst of great festivities there. The Queen's subjects will make the most of their chance to honor him as his visit, at this juncture, carries full amends for the famous Krueger dispatch in 1895. France and Russia cannot enjoy the spectacle and it is probably not intended that they should.

The anti-spitting ordinance in some of the Mainland cities loves a shining mark. Not long ago a San Francisco millionaire was taken in for expectorating in a street car and more recently United States Senator Carter of Montana was fined for a like offence. Nothing suits a policeman better, when he is not spitting himself, than to detect and "run in" some prominent citizen for the petty crime.

General Funston will soon pass this way again on his second voyage to Manila. He goes with the God speed of Kansas politicians who are anxious to get him out of the area of next summer's politics. His appointment to the command of a new brigade and the manner in which it left him no patriotic choice but acceptance was a piece of political work which would have done credit to Richard Croker himself.

Admiral Dewey in a curt note to the New York World has declined to consider a Presidential nomination. He wants nothing to do with politics. The conclusion will disappoint some Democrats and give Bryan relief, but it is one that might have been expected of a man of Dewey's strong common sense. The astral body of General Hancock, erstwhile Democratic nominee for President, must be in a mood to applaud.

The work being done by the British colony in Hawaii for the families of Reserve men called to the colors by the crisis in South Africa and the attitude of France and Russia is one of sensible philanthropy. If Great Britain is to have Reserves who are worth anything to her she must see that their families do not suffer on account of their rush to arms. Naturally the British Government cannot undertake to maintain the households of its troops and such work must fall to private hands. For the latter the task will be an easy one if all Britons, throughout the empire, take up the work in the spirit of those in Hawaii.

Colonial rule is a sort of a bugbear in Hawaii but it does not appear to be much else. The chances are that the United States will find it easier to invest every new possession capable of self-government with the Territorial form than to set up a political system in it for which the Constitution does not provide. Where the people are not far enough along to be trusted to rule themselves they may be governed during the transition period by the military but Hawaii is not in that class. One thing in particular which stands in the way of a colonial appurtenance to the United States is the section in the organic law which compels free trade between all parts of the Union, putting every inch of American soil under a common revenue system. With such a binding tie it would hardly be worth while to call a civilized acquisition like Hawaii anything less than the Territory it would practically become.

## A PLAINT FROM HAWAII.

Among the plans for the proper use of the Treasury surplus we notice one proposed by "Homesteader," a correspondent of the Hilo Tribune. Part of the communication is as follows:

I see by the papers that the Government has a big balance of cash in the public Treasury that they do not know what to do with. If such is the case, may I ask why they do not fulfil their promises and make roads to the lands of the homesteaders? Does this Government care more for hoarding up money than it does for justice? Is this Government above the law, and does it care nothing about its promises? Does it care nothing that these homesteaders are likely to be ruined for lack of roads, which the Government has faithfully promised to make? Does it care nothing that the produce that has been raised on these homesteads is rotting in the field because it costs more to get it down through the impassable woods than it is worth, or the money that can be got for it? Is there one law for the Government, while it fulfils none of its promises, intends to hold down the homesteader to the strict letter of the contract?

It is true as "Homesteader" says that there is a big balance in the public Treasury which the Government does not know what to do with, but this fact in no way implies that the money can be taken out and spent at the pleasure of those who have it in charge. The funds of the people are better guarded than that. What is needed to make them available for public works is legislative appropriation and it is a question that has been referred to the Government at Washington whether these Islands have a Legislature which may appropriate or can have one during this period of political transition. Because our ad-interim Government is not "above the law" or below it, public improvements, such as roads, streets and reservoirs must wait. We may regret the circumstance but it cannot be evaded, no matter how dire the need of the homesteader in Hawaii or the water-consumer in Honolulu.

But if President McKinley and his advisers decide that the Hawaiian Legislature is still in existence and may sit and enact laws at the regular time, we do not doubt that the road-making needs of all the Islands will have their pro rata of the public funds. No one knows better than Mr. Dole, for example, that roads and civilization go hand in hand. He has taken a great interest in road development, particularly on the Island of Hawaii. Those of this population who, like him, are anxious to see Hawaii become a white man's country, speaking of it both as an island and as a group, agree that the sooner the productive parts are gridironed with roads the sooner these Islands will become populous with thrifty whites. Roads for carts and roads for locomotives are what we all want—but unfortunately we cannot clear the way for them by saying "Open, sesame!" either at the Executive building or in the press. The Government at Washington must speak first; the local law-making authority will then, perhaps, have its turn to be heard.

Still, "Homesteader's" case is a hard one. It invokes sympathy, the more so because the Hawaiian Government undoubtedly promised to open up communication for him and for others who are situated as he is on public lands. But events have taken from this Government the power to do as it pleases. That is the stubborn fact which is really in "Homesteader's" way; but it is one, luckily, which may be soon removed.

Mr. Bryan takes heart of grace and predicts a Democratic victory next year. It is noticeable though, that he is the only Democrat who wants the chance of winning it.

## THE WAR IN SOUTH AFRICA

There is nothing to relieve the strain of the Natal situation from the standpoint of the British, save the bulldog defence of Ladysmith, Kimberley and Mafeking. Behind their earthworks the British soldiers have so far done their duty quite in the Lucknow fashion, but in the open field they are most unfortunate. Valor has been wasted and discretion too flagrantly economized in all the outside movements of General White's forces with the result that British military prestige is weakened, not only in South Africa but elsewhere.

The earlier reports of poor marksmanship by the Boers were soon contradicted by the list of British casualties. When the war broke out London writers, among them some military experts, declared that the men of the Veldt were no longer sharpshooters. The game had been driven away and the chance of rifle practice thereby lessened while the young Boers, owing to an access of wealth and luxury, had ceased to value a knowledge of small arms. But the war bulletins show that the Boer, old or young, still knows how to hit his mark. And what is more surprising he does well with his artillery. The best guns in the Boer army, the Canet quick-firing field pieces, were only received in Pretoria a few days before hostilities began. Yet the natural marksmanship of the Boers is such that they put shells just about where they want them to go. We read of wounded men trying to hide and of shells bursting over their heads; of officers directing their men in the open and shells exploding in their faces. To be sure the British guns have done terrible execution but that was to have been expected. The point we make is about the unusual facility shown by farmers with whom modern artillery is a recent acquisition.

But the three towns the Boers are investing still hold out. That, after all, is the main point and all the field reverses will go for nothing if Ladysmith, Kimberley and Mafeking can be preserved intact until the arrival of Sir Redvers Buller's army corps. The character of the war must quickly change. The Boers will be put on the defensive and will be forced by superior numbers to take the back track. They may indeed win some victories, but each one will weaken them in numbers however much it may strengthen them in prestige. Finally, unless the unexpected happens in Europe, the British will crush them by sheer numerical weight and South Africa will be free to take up the work, under the best possible auspices, of continental redemption.

The automobile is already taking the form it will have to achieve before displacing the trolley and the horse—that is, if there is truth in this statement of a Milwaukee paper: "A man from Iowa has invented a machine weighing not more than 75 pounds, which can be attached to any vehicle now drawn by a horse and is capable of reaching a speed of 50 miles an hour. It is said a stock company backed by \$1,000,000 is soon to be formed in Milwaukee to manufacture the machine, and that a man well known throughout the United States will be at the head of the concern." If the new device lives up to its prospectus, Honolulu will prove to be a good customer for it.

Miss H. Lewers was a through passenger by the Coptic; she goes to San Francisco to meet her family.

AT THE GAZETTE OFFICE.

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